UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/1113
23 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 20 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement issued on 20 November 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on Burundi.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ernst SUCHARIPA
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 20 November 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on Burundi

The European Union is deeply concerned at the recent attacks and acts of violence committed against civilians in Burundi, particularly at their apparent ethnic focus. In this context, it equally condemns the massacre committed by armed rebels in Kanyosha as that committed by Government forces in Mutambu.

The European Union welcomes the decision of the Government of Burundi to set up a Commission of Inquiry to investigate into the massacre in Mutambu and calls on all parties to cooperate with this Commission. The European Union hopes that the Commission will work in a quick and thorough way and that those found responsible will be brought to justice. It calls on the Government of Burundi to reinforce the discipline of the armed forces in order to avoid such incidents in the future.

The European Union further appeals to the Government of Burundi to cooperate fully with the human rights observers of the United Nations in Burundi in order to allow an independent investigation of all incidents.

The European Union urges all parties to the conflict in Burundi to immediately stop all acts of violence and attacks directed at civilians, to respect international humanitarian law and to take appropriate action to ensure ethnic harmony. It calls on all parties to join those who are engaged in the negotiations and the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Burundi in the framework of the Arusha process. The European Union reiterates its readiness to further support this process.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.